

#### § 3560.304

expensive party halls or hotel rooms and payment for alcoholic beverages or gifts to management agent staff.

(ix) Billing for practices that are inefficient such as routine use of collect calls from a site manager to a management agent office.

(c) *Priorities.* The priority order of planned and actual budget expenditures will be:

- (1) Senior position lienholder, if any;
- (2) Operating and maintenance expenses, including taxes and insurance;
- (3) Agency debt payments;
- (4) Reserve account requirements;
- (5) Other authorized expenditures; and
- (6) Return on owner investment.

(d) *Agency review and approval.* (1) The Agency will only approve housing project budgets that meet the requirements of paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of this section.

(2) If no rent change is requested, borrowers must submit budget documents for Agency approval 60 calendar days prior to the start of the housing project's fiscal year. The Agency will notify borrowers if the budget submission does not meet the requirements of paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section. The borrower will have 10 days to submit the additional material.

(3) If a rent change is requested, the borrower must submit budget documents to the Agency and notify tenants of the requested rent change at least 90 calendar days prior to the start of the housing project's fiscal year.

(i) The Agency will notify borrowers if the budget submission does not meet the requirements of paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section, or if the rent and utility allowance request has been denied in accordance with §3560.205(f). The borrower will have 10 days to submit the additional material to address any issues raised by the Agency.

(ii) The rent change is not approved until the Agency issues a written approval. If there is no response from the Agency within the 30-day period, the rent change is considered automatic. The following budgets are not eligible for automatic approval:

(A) Budgets with rent increases above \$25 per unit; and

#### 7 CFR Ch. XXXV (1-1-05 Edition)

(B) Budgets that are submitted late or that miss other deadlines set by the Agency.

(4) If the Agency denies the budget approval, the Agency will notify the borrower in writing.

(5) If budget approval is denied, the borrower shall continue to operate the housing project on the basis of the most recently approved budget.

#### § 3560.304 Initial operating capital.

(a) *Purpose.* To provide a source of capital for start-up costs, such as the purchase of equipment, and paying operating, maintenance, and debt service expenses. Borrowers are required to make an initial operating capital contribution to the general operating account as described in §3560.64.

(b) *Authorized uses of initial operating capital.* Initial operating capital may be used only to pay for approved budgeted expenses.

(c) *Withdrawal of initial operating capital.* Initial operating capital funds may be withdrawn by a borrower if:

(1) The initial operating capital was provided from the borrower's own funds;

(2) The borrower requests the withdrawal after the second year of housing project operations and prior to the 7th year of operations;

(3) The housing project has had a 90 percent occupancy rate for a period of 12 months prior to the withdrawal request;

(4) The withdrawal will not affect the financial viability of the housing project;

(5) Contributions to the reserve account are at authorized levels;

(6) The withdrawal request will not result in rent increases; and

(7) There are no outstanding deficiencies in management's physical maintenance of the housing project.

#### § 3560.305 Return on investment.

(a) *Borrower's return on investment.* Borrowers may receive a return on their investment (ROI) in accordance with the terms of their loan agreement and the following:

(1) If there is a positive net cash flow in housing project operations, the ROI may be taken by the borrower after the housing project's fiscal year, provided

that the balance of the reserve account is equal to or greater than required deposits minus authorized withdrawals. If the annual financial reports indicate that an ROI should not have been taken, borrowers will be required to return any unauthorized ROI.

(2) If there is negative cash flow in housing project operations, the Agency may authorize the borrower to take the ROI only after the Agency has reviewed the housing project's annual financial reports and determines:

(i) Surplus cash exists in either the general operating account as defined in § 3560.306(d)(1) or the reserve account, if the balance is greater than the required deposits minus authorized withdrawals.

(ii) The housing project has sufficient funds to address identified capital or operational needs.

(b) *Unpaid return on investment.* An earned, but unpaid ROI for the previous year only may be requested by the borrower and authorized by the Agency under the provisions of § 3560.305(a)(2) provided the current year's ROI has been paid first and a rent increase is not required to generate funds to pay the unpaid ROI.

#### § 3560.306 Reserve account.

(a) *Purpose.* To meet the major capital expense needs of a housing project, borrowers must establish and maintain a reserve account.

(b) *Financial management of the reserve account.* Borrower management of the reserve account is subject to the requirements of 7 CFR part 1902, subpart A regarding supervised bank accounts.

(c) *Funding of the reserve account.* Borrowers must make payments to the reserve account in the amount established in loan documents, beginning with the first loan payment or a date specified in loan documents.

(d) *Transfer of surplus general operating account funds.* (1) The general operating account will be deemed to contain surplus funds when the balance at the end of the housing project's fiscal year, after all payables, exceeds 20 percent of the operating and maintenance expenses. If the borrower is escrowing taxes and insurance premiums, include the amount that should be escrowed by year end and subtract such tax and in-

surance premiums from operating and maintenance expenses used to calculate 20 percent of the operating and maintenance expenses.

(2) If a housing project's general operating account has surplus funds at the end of the housing project's fiscal year, the Agency will require the borrower to use the surplus funds to address capital needs, make a deposit in the housing project's reserve account, reduce the debt service on the borrower's loan, or reduce rents in the following year. At the end of the borrower's fiscal year, if the borrower is required to transfer surplus funds from the general operating account to the reserve account, the transfer does not change the future required contributions to the reserve account.

(e) *Account requirements.* Borrowers must establish and maintain the reserve account according to § 3560.65, § 3560.302(c)(5), and the following requirements:

(1) Reserve accounts must be deposited in interest-bearing accounts or securities; and

(2) Reserve accounts must be supervised accounts that require Agency countersignatures on all withdrawals.

(f) *Funds invested in securities.* In addition to the requirements specified in paragraph (e) of this section, the following requirements apply when reserve funds are invested in securities:

(1) The reserve account must be held either at a Federally insured domestic institution such as a bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or at a domestic institution authorized to sell securities.

(2) The borrower must record the price actually paid for the securities. When designated as a reserve deposit, the price paid must equal the required contribution to reserves.

(3) Borrowers must be knowledgeable about industry practices and consider the impact of typical fees and charges for purchases and sales and maintenance of an account when making investment decisions. Such fees may be paid for out of reserves, only with the consent of the Agency. Housing project funds may not be used to pay for a financial advisor.

(g) *Use of the reserve account.* (1) Borrowers must request Agency approval